1:Vaillant A-5 (1928-1936)1941 NU7 Aztec NU7

311 578 achieved by the relatively unlimited possibilities of *chinampa* agriculture.

729 728 471 The Tenochcas supplemented their land hunger by another means. In conquered territories successful warriors received grants of land which were worked by members of the defeated tribe. Small colonies sometimes lived off this [428] land to guard against revolt in the subjugated area. Such property passed from father to son, but if there were no heir it reverted to the tribal authority, not the clan in which the tenant had membership. Other such land must have been held for the benefit of the religious organization. Thus the central authority of Tenochtitlan, and presumably Texcoco as well, held considerable property to support the elaborate pomp of Church and State without straining the resources of the tribesmen. The relative fluidity of such real estate gave the tribal authority a wherewithal to adjust inequalities and dissatisfactions among the more ambitious tribal members. Naturally, as the Aztec peoples were less highly developed socially than ourselves, they did not attain our own elaborate system of rewards and adjustments by means of federal, state and municipal appointments.[a]

651 A powerful Aztec tribe had another source of support: tribute. The levies often consisted of foodstuffs and raw materials, both native and foreign to the Valley, and also included warriors' and priests' costumes, mantles, pottery and other articles of craftsmanship. Distributed throughout the community these goods enriched both communal enterprise and private convenience.[a] (See Plates 62, bottom right; 64.)

436 438 32 Manufacture and trade were beginning to play an important part in Aztec economy, although not to the extent of societies which have developed media of exchange, like

1:Vaillant A-5 (1928-1936)1941 NU7 Aztec NU7

money, and therefore emphasize personal wealth in the possession of such a commodity. Manufacture was in the handcraft stage, carried on as a supplement to the main business of raising food. Most households were self-sufficient, making whatever they required in the way of tools, utensils or clothing. However, certain towns had access to natural resources which others had not and developed special skill in exploiting them. A town might have a good clay bed, for example, and its pottery would be far superior to that of surrounding communities. Another village would be especially successful in growing peppers, while a third might have in its territory a good quality of obsidian or flint for making stone tools. Thus such products would be exchanged by one town for the produce of another and even redistributed by the same process. Shells from the Caribbean have been traded from hand to hand as far as the central United States; pottery vases from Salvador were carried to distant Tepic* in Mexico; gold ornaments from Panama appeared as votive offerings in the Sacred Well of Chichen Itza in Yucatan.[1] (See Plate 38.)

Such regional specialization was accompanied by the perfectly natural tendency of individuals to exploit what they made and produced with greatest aptitude. As technical knowledge grew specialization increased, and the market became an important institution. Each town held one at specified intervals to which people came from great distances. At Tlaltelolco the daily market was a wonder of the Western world, exciting by its lavish variety the admiring envy of the Spaniards. The importance of the market still persists in Indian communities, so much so that in Guate-

*Te-pe'ek.

1:Vaillant A-5 (1928-1936)1941 NU7 Aztec NU7

438 mala the people travel miles to exchange their produce; and
443 so important is the market as a social function that a merchant will not dispose of his produce except at that place, even though offered payment far in excess of its market value.*

437 Barter was the only means of exchange, and value was
436 established by desirability and rarity. Money, an exchange medium of fixed value, did not exist. However, something had to be found which would balance an inequality of exchange by being not too valuable to use in adjusting small transactions and at the same time universally wanted. The cacao bean answered this requirement and was easily portable as well. The Aztecs were extremely fond of chocolate (the word itself is of Aztec derivation), so that beans were gladly converted into the national luxury drink. Quills of gold dust sometimes were used as an exchange medium, as were crescent-shaped knives of thin-beaten copper. These last had not the common acceptance or the utility of cacao beans, although they represented easily portable value.*

317 The most precious substance among the Aztecs was jade,
435 or stones resembling it in texture and color. Both jadeite and nephrite occur in the New World, and the American variety is distinguishable from the Asiatic stone. Uncut stones are seldom seen today, for there is no lapidaries' market in modern Middle America or the United States, whereas jade is still extensively worked in China, so that men find it worth their while to search rivers in Burma for boulders of this rare substance. (See Plate 3.)

435 The testimony of the Conquistador Bernal Diaz is conclusive on this point of value. During the night when Cortes retreated from Mexico the leader, after taking off his share of treasure, turned the surplus over to his troops. Many,

8: Barlow E-4 (no date)1949 NU7 Aztec NU7

OTHER GOODS*

2 strings of chalchiuites
800 bunches of quetzal feathers
1 royal emblem called *tlalpiloni*
40 sacks of cochineal
20 bowls of gold dust

Tribute of the component towns.—A few details exist concerning the way in which the payment of this rich tribute was apportioned.

Atlatlaucca and a fellow town paid cochineal, cotton mantles, green and varicolored feathers, and chalchiuites, all of which they purchased from other towns by means of little cotton mantles which served as money. They also gave military aid.[*]

Cuicatlan gave feathers, gold, and "piedras" to the tribute collectors, who relayed these items to higher officials. The collectors themselves were given (mordida ?) mantles and food, and sometimes fruit was sent to the Mexican garrisons in the Mixteca.[*]

Chila's presents of gold jewels and mantles have been mentioned.[*]

Icxitlan claimed to have given no tribute other than gifts presented on visits to the capital. These presents were rich feathers and precious stones and live snakes to feed the birds of the Royal Aviary.[*]

Malinaltepec shared in giving the items listed under Atlatlaucca, above.

Papaloticpac gave gold dust and food for the Mexican garrisons.[*]

[*] *PNE*, 4: 165. The fellow town was Malinaltepec: "le dauan en cada pueblo de çierta cantidad de grana cochinilla, mantas de algodon y plumeria verde y de todas colores, y unas piedras verdes ... y estos generos de cosas las iban a buscar a otros pueblos los yndios, y las rescatauan a trueque de unas mantillas de algodon del tamaño de vn pliego de papel, que corria entre ellos por moneda ... y quando los capitanes de Munteçuma les mandavan que enbiasen gente de guerra para ir a otras conquistas, lo hacian."

[*] *PNE*, 4: 185: "Y para quel dicho su Señor tributase a Montecçuma, de quien era su sujeto, buscaban los naturales plumas, oro, piedras, y a los cobradores que venian a cobrar este tributo por Montecçuma, les davan mantas, comida y otros presentes, sin lo que pagavan al gran Señor que hera Montecçuma, y algunas vezes enbiavan frutas a los questaban en las guarniçiones de Montecçuma en la provinçia de la Misteca."

[*] See Chila, above.

[*] *PNE*, 5: 75: " ... era sujeto al real ynperio de mexico, no le daban tributo ninguno mas de quando yvan a verle a mexico le llevaban en presente plumas ricas y piedras preciadas y culebras bibas para dar a comer a las aves de bolateria y munchos jeneros de aves preciadas que tenia." The Royal Aviary stood where the later Convento de San Francisco was built.

[*] "En tienpo de su ynfidelidad y antes que los españoles los sujetasen obedecian a Montecçuma ... . Lo que tributaban los naturales a su Señor natural y este a Montecçuma era oro en polvo, bastimentos que llevavan a las guarniçiones donde Montecçuma tenia gente de guerra" (*PNE*, 4: 90).

11:Diaz T,H-5 (1519-1520) 1910
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off the stone itself; and the fisherwomen and others who sell some small cakes made from a sort of ooze which they get out of the great lake, which curdles, and from this they make a bread having a flavour something like cheese. There are for sale axes of brass and copper and tin, and gourds and gaily painted jars made of wood. I could wish that I had finished telling of all the things which are sold there, but they are so numerous and of such different quality and the great market place with its surrounding arcades was so crowded with people, that one would not have been able to see and inquire about it all in two days.

Then we went to the great Cue, and when we were already approaching its great courts, before leaving the market place itself, there were many more merchants, who, as I was told, brought gold for sale in grains, just as it is taken from the mines. The gold is placed in thin quills of the geese of the country, white quills, so that the gold can be seen through, and according to the length and thickness of the quills they arrange their accounts with one another, how much so many mantles or so many gourds full of cacao were worth, or how many slaves, or whatever other thing they were exchanging.

Now let us leave the great market place, and not look at it again, and arrive at the great courts and walls where the great Cue stands. Before reaching the great Cue there is a great enclosure of courts, it seems to me larger than the plaza of Salamanca, with two walls of masonry surrounding it and the court itself all paved with very smooth great white flagstones. And where there were not these stones it was cemented and burnished and all very clean, so that one could not find any dust or a straw in the whole place.

When we arrived near the great Cue and before we had ascended a single step of it, the Great Montezuma sent

16:Bandelier E-4 (no date)1880 NU7 Aztec NU7

life:[73] hence little was left to him beyond his legitimate wants. 463
We see thus, that hardly any chance was given for the formation of a class which, resting upon the kind of occupation, might assume the position of "caste" in the organization of aboriginal Mexican society.

It is repeatedly asserted, and on high authority, that the mer- 441
chants or traders of Mexico enjoyed particular privileges. We must premise here that merchants, in the sense of venders of other people's manufactures or products (thus living off of the difference between cost and proceeds) were known only in one way.[74] The name for merchant was "man who exchanges one

[73] That the artisans or mechanics contributed a portion of their wares in the shape of tribute, is amply proven. See for instance, *Oviedo* (Lib. XXXIII, cap LI, p. 530. Easily misunderstood!) This passage of Oviedo explains the action of "wrathy chief" towards the "jewellers" and "goldsmiths" at the arrival of Cortés, as related by Tezozomoc, Durán, and by Sahagun. See also: *Zurita* ("*Rapport*, etc.," p. 223). *Bustamante* ("Tezcoco, etc.," Parte III, cap. V, p. 232). *Herrera* (Dec. III, lib. IV, cap. XVII, p. 136). *Clavigero* (Lib. VII, cap. XV, p. 480). *Bancroft* (Vol. III, cap. VI, pp. 231 and 232). [651]

[74] The existence of currency, or of money, in the shape of grains of cacao, T shapen 436
pieces of tin or copper, and quills filled with gold dust is generally admitted. See 437
for instance, *Prescott* ("*Conquest of Mexico*," Book IV, cap. II, p. 140). *H. H. Bancroft* (Vol. II, cap. XII, pp. 381, 382, and 383). Cacao played, among the ancient Mexicans, the same role as "wampum" did among the northern Indians, for purposes of exchange, but did not go beyond it. In regard to the so-called copper or tin coins, or rather marks or checks, it is well to examine the matter more closely. *Cortés* ("*Carta Quarta*" in Vedia I, p. 111), says very positively that at Tacheo, he obtained sundry small pieces of tin like very thin money ("á manera de moneda muy delgada"), which he indeed found to have been used as currency by the natives. ("halló que en dicha provincia, aun en otras, se tratuba por moneda"). *Bernal Diez* (Cap, XCII, p. 99, Vedia II) mentions axes of "brass, copper, and tin" ("hachas de laton y cobre y estaño"), bartered at the market place of Tlatelulco, "and before we left this square ("plaza") we met with other traders, who from what they said, sold gold in grains as they obtained it from the mines, and enclosed in quills of the geese of the land, and so thin ("asi blancos" so white) that the gold might be seen, and by the length and size of the quills they determined how many mantles or "jiquipiles" (bags of 8000 grains) of cacao they were worth, or slaves, or any other things for which they bartered it," ("ó otra qualquier cosa á que lo trocaban"). *Gomara* ("Conquista, etc.," pp. 348 and 349). "But the chief one is cacahuatl, which serves as coin. . . ." "Their buying and selling consists in exchanging one thing for another. . . ." (Id., p. 451). "No tenian moneda, teniendo mucha plata, oro y cobre, y sabiéndolo hundir y labrar, y contratando mucho en ferias y mercados. Su moneda usual y corriente es cacauatl ó cacao." *Oviedo* (Lib. VIII, cap. XXX, pp. 316, 317. Lib. XXXIII, cap. LI, p. 536) mentions only cacao as currency. *Torquemada* (Lib. XIV, cap. XIV, p. 260). "It was customary at these marts ('en estos mercados') to exchange ('trocar') one thing for another, and even nowadays this is sometimes practised; but everywhere cacao is most commonly used. In other parts they used, besides, some small mantles which they call Patolquachtli. . . . . Elsewhere they used plentifully some copper coins, almost like unto ("de hechura") a Tau T, two or three fingers wide and made of thin plates ("planchuela") some thicker, other less thick. Where there was much gold ("donde avia mucho Oro"), small quills filled with it, circulated among the Indians," ("traian unos Cantillos de ello, y andaba entre los Indios mucho de esto"). *Alonzo Zuazo* ("*Carta*

16:Bandelier E-4 (no date) 1880 NU7 Aztec NU7

441 thing for another" ("tlanamacani"),[75] and such was every artisan, since, in the market place of aboriginal Mexico, every artisan bartered his own manufactures for whatever he needed for sub-

436 al Padre Fray Luis de Figueroa." Santiago de Cuba, 14 Nov., 1521. Col. de Doc. Vol. I,
437 p. 361). "Hay una moneda entre ellos con que venden y compran, que se llama cacahuate, . . ." *Anonymous Conquerer* (p. 280, etc.) mentions Cacao, "e é moneta la piu comune, ma molto incomoda dopo l'oro é l'argento . . . . *Acosta* (Lib. IV, cap. 3, p. 196) "No se halla, que los Indios usassen oro, ni plata, ni metal para moneda, ni para precio de la cosas, usauanlo para ornato, como esta dicho." The statement of Torquemada is plain. While it explains the gradual ascent and development of the notion that the Mexicans had an equivalent to money, it clearly proves that only barter and exchange, and no actual buying, took place. The copper-plates which, as Mr. Bancroft justly remarks, "constituted perhaps the nearest approach to coined money," still were not intended even for such a purpose, since they were of varying size and thickness. But the story of the *copper* or *golden* "*Eagles*" given to the Mexican traders as money wherewith to buy, as faithfully reported and gravely discussed by Mr. Bancroft also, deserves some special ventilation. This story is taken from *Sahagun* (Lib. IX, cap. II, p. 343) "y dábales 1600 toldillos, que ellos llaman quauhtli para rescatar." These toldillos they divided into two parts of 800 each. Now Sahagun's editor, Sr. C. M. de Bustamante, very confidently asserts in note a, (p. 342): "Era una moneda que consistia en unos pedazos de cobre cortados en figura de T.—Clavigero, tom. I, pág. 349." The reference to *Clavigero* is for Lib. VII, cap. XXXVI. Now "Toldillo" is derived from "toldár" that is, to shroud or cover, and means merely a *cover*, and not a piece of metal. Used also for a covered litter or portable chair. Besides, "quauhtli" indeed signifies Eagle, but it is an evident misprint and should read "quachtli," which signifies a *mantle* or *sheet*, thus perfectly agreeing both with the "toldillo" and with the "patolquachtli" of Torquemada. The "golden eagles" of Mr. Brasseur are therefore rendered utterly useless.

291 Anyone reading *Tezcucmoc* will see at a glance what a conspicuous part these mantles "Quachtli," (*Molina*, II, p. 84) played in intercourse and barter. According to *Ramirez de Fuenleal* (Letter, etc., Col. de Doc's conc. le Méxique, I, p. 251) they formed to a certain extent the basis of tribute. These cotton-sheets are well described by *Peter Martyr* ("*De nouo Orbe*," Dec. V., cap. X, p. 230): "Concerning the shape and fashion of their garments, it is ridiculous to behold: they call it a garmente, because they couer themselues therewith. but it hath no resemblance with any other garment, of any fashion: it is only a square couering like unto that, which your holiness cast on your shoulders, sometimes in my presence, when you are about to kimbe your heade, to preserve your garments, least haire, or any other filth should fal upon them. That couering they cast about their necke, and then knitting two of the four corners under their throate, they lette the couering hang downe, which scarce coureth the bodie as lowe as the legges. Having seen these garmente I ceased to wonder, that so great a number of garments was sent to Cortes, as we mentioned before: for they are all of small moment, and many of them take uppe but little roome."

441 With the absence of money the profession of merchant as one who lives from the
439 profits of his sales, becomes limited almost to what he can gather from out-side of his
437 own community, in other words, to what he can *import*. Their main and almost exclusive business consisted in effecting intercourse between the tribes. At home, every artisan sold or rather exchanged his own wares in the public markets. See *Cortés* ("*Carta Segunda*," Vedia I, pp. 32 and 33), *Bernal Diez* ("*Hist. verdad.*," etc., Vedia II, p. 89, cap. XCII), *Gomara* ("*Conquista*," p. 348, Vedia I), "Cada oficio y cada mercaderia tiene su lugar señalado . . . .", *Sahagun* (Lib. X, cap. XVI, p. 41), "El que vende piedras preciosas, ó lapidario es de esta propriedad, que sabe labrar sutilmente las piedras preciosas y pulirlas. . . ." He mentions as manufacturers of their own goods the following: "plateros de oro" (41), "Tratantes en mantas" (Cap. XVII, 42), "que venden mantas," "que venden cotaras" (Cap. XX, pp. 48, 49 and 51), "olleros," "que